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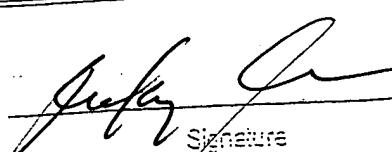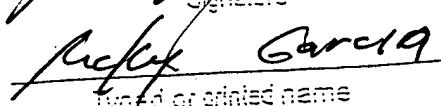
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(54) **PROGRAMMABLE NETWORK DEVICE**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A programmable network device is described. The program-
mable network device executes software modules resident
on its hardware to support assorted applications and network
management services. These modules may be dynamically
loaded, unloaded, or modified without interrupting network
traffic routed through the device. The loading and unloading
of modules can be administered remotely, via a network
backbone, service provider network, LAN, or other inter-
network coupled to the device. Alternatively, administrators
may alter the operating parameters of individual manage-
ment modules via the network to effect performance gains or
modify existing operating parameters.

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